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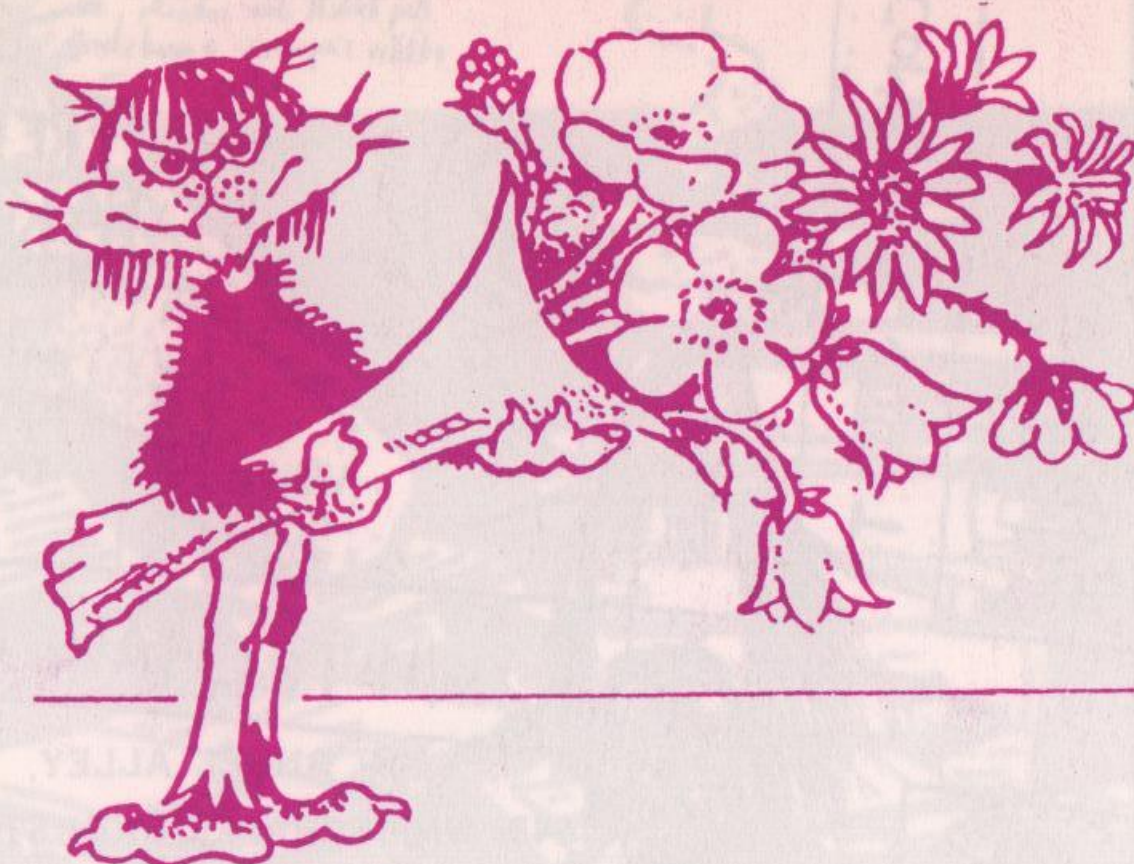
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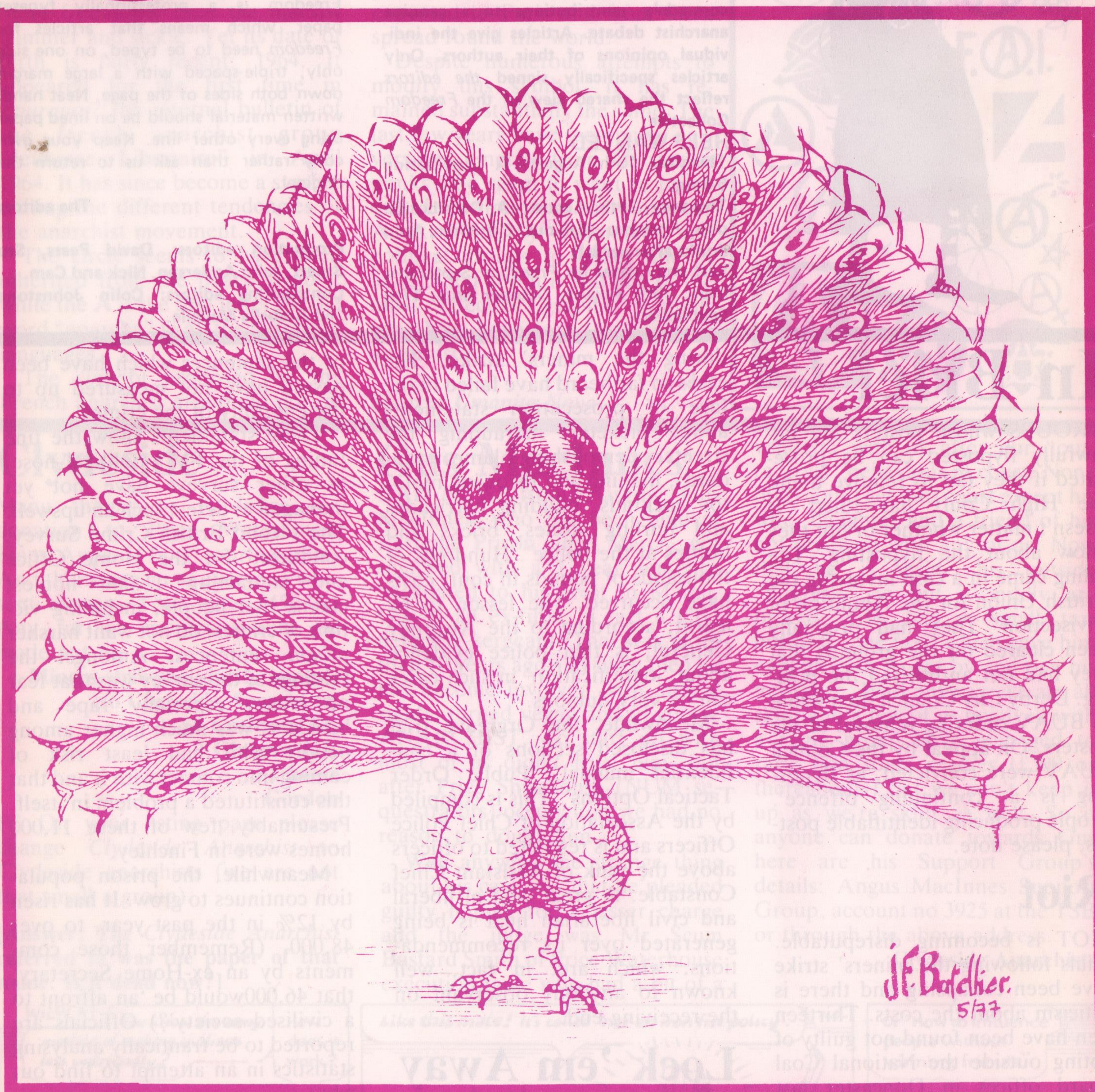
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IN THIS ISSUE:

The Real CNT Stands Up Anarchy, Porn and Repression

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The editors

Production editors: David Peers, Stu Stuart, John Anderson, Nick and Cam.
Contributing editors: Colin Johnstone and Arabella Melville.

In Brief

GROUPS whose posters are unlawfully flyposted can be prosecuted if they fail to remove them, the High Court has ruled. It doesn't matter whether or not they know about the flyposting. The ruling came in a case involving the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection. They had originally been cleared on the grounds that they had not authorised the posting. Derby City Council then wrote to BUAV ordering removal of the posters. On appeal by the Council BUAV were convicted, as flyposting is a 'continuing offence'. People producing identifiable posters, please note.

Riot

RIOT is becoming disreputable. Trials following the miners' strike have been collapsing and there is criticism about the costs. Thirteen men have been found not guilty of rioting outside the National Coal Board offices in Doncaster last June. This trial took two months. The prosecution has withdrawn charges against 14 men, charged with riot and unlawful assembly at Orgreave coking plant. The trial of another eight is due to begin. A total of 137 people were charged with rioting ('three or more people... in the execution of a common purpose to use force or violence')

during the miners' strike. The cases so far heard have failed in the face of prosecution statements about pickets, 'marauding the streets, demolishing lamp standards, making and throwing molotov cocktails, building barricades and hurling stones, bricks and bottles at the police'. Hundreds of thousands of pounds in court costs have occurred. The lesson to be learnt, according to the Attorney General, is that police evidence about 'identification' in such cases can be very dubious.

Meanwhile, the Orgreave trial has disclosed sections of a confidential manual, 'Public Order Tactical Options'. This is compiled by the Association of Chief Police Officers and is restricted to officers above the rank of Assistant Chief Constable. A great deal of liberal and civil libertarian heat is being generated over its recommendations, which are, in fact, well known to anybody observant on the receiving end.

Lock 'em Away

THERE has been a flurry of conflicting reports on prison sentencing policies. The government will make a second attempt to give the prosecution the right to appeal against lenient sentences. The Prime Minister told a convention of the American Bar Association. The feeling is growing in our country and elsewhere that some

of the sentences which have been passed have not measured up to the enormity of the crimes'.

These statements show the fine tuning of the PM's political nose, as other surveys have not yet managed to detect such an upswell. The second British Crime Survey, conducted for the Home Office and contacting 11,000 homes, claims that people, including victims of crimes, do not want harsher prison sentences. Amongst the findings of the survey was that fear of crime, especially rape and burglary, was much higher among people who had least risk of coming into contact with it and that this constituted a problem in itself. Presumably, few of these 11,000 homes were in Finchley.

Meanwhile, the prison population continues to grow. It has risen by 12% in the past year, to over 48,000. (Remember those comments by an ex-Home Secretary, that 46,000 would be 'an affront to a civilised society?') Officials are reported to be frantically analysing statistics in an attempt to find out why.

Rats

THIS column has commented before on the rat problems in the Far East. Some Indonesian local authorities have introduced a new measure. Couples must pay 10 rats to marry and 20 for a divorce.

DP

The story of "A"

ONE COMES ACROSS the circled A all over the place. In Europe one comes across it even more frequently than the marxist hammer and sickle. Yet its date of birth is fairly recent: 1964. It appeared for the first time in *Pourquoi?* the internal bulletin of the french anarchist group "Jeunesse Libertaire" in April 1964. It has since become a symbol uniting the different tendencies of the anarchist movement.

The circle seems to have been inherited from the peace symbol, while the A is the first letter for the word "anarchy" in all the european languages.

The symbol proposed by the French anarchist group did not, at

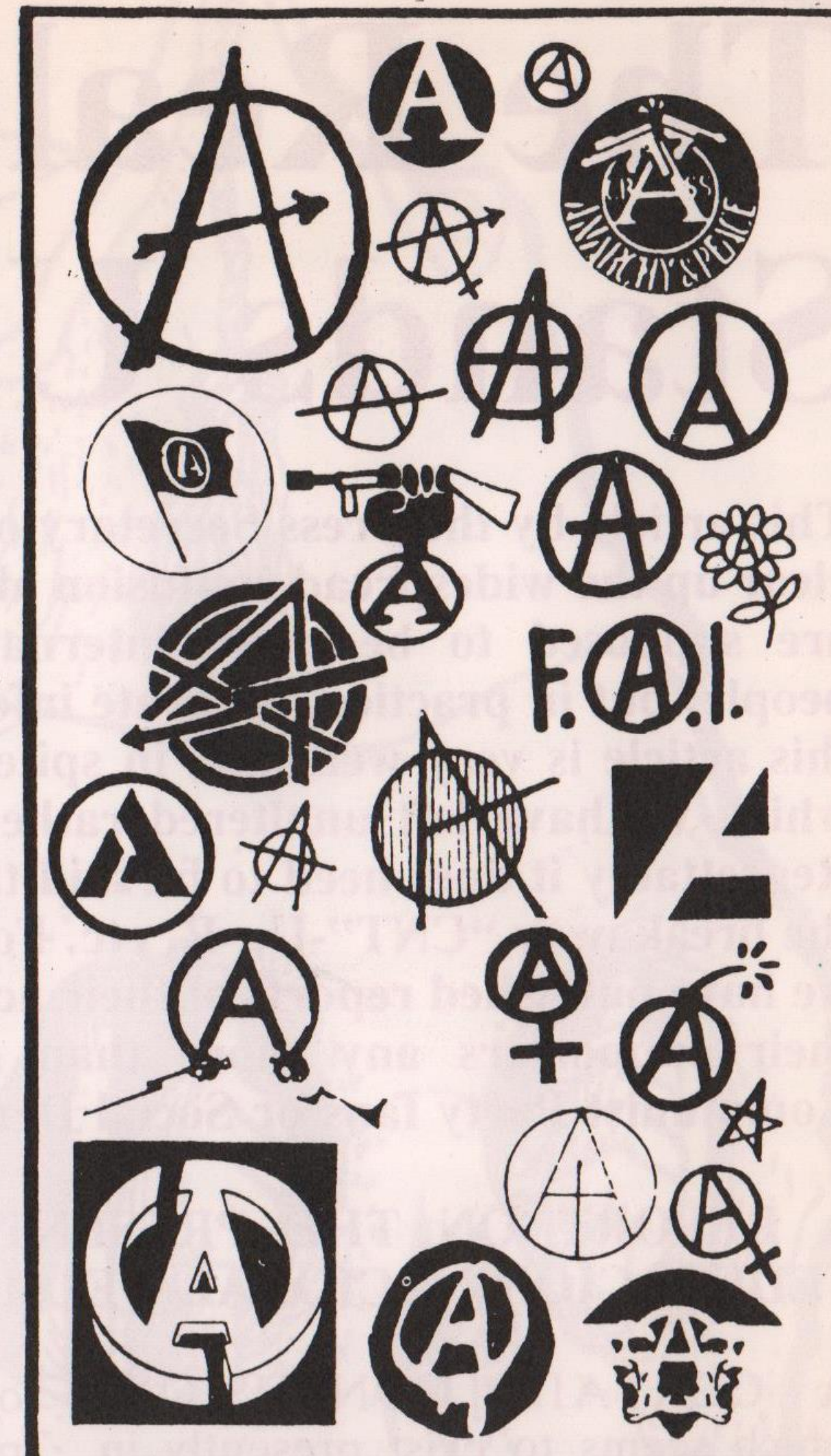
first, arouse any particular interest. In 1966, young anarchists of the "Circolo Sacco e Vanzetti" in Milan rediscovered it and adopted it, anticipating its proliferation in 1968.

In 1968, the circled A spread throughout Italy and was to be found on walls, banners and posters. Paradoxically, it was re-exported to Paris and from there spread round the world.

Despite numerous attempts to modify this symbol, it has remained substantially the same. The last few years have seen many new versions emerge from libertarian punks who seem to want to break out of the circle that surrounds the A. Attempts by commercial and political groups to hijack the A have failed and it is still one of the most effective graphic symbols anarchists have found to promote anarchism.

JA

Source: *Umanita Nova*



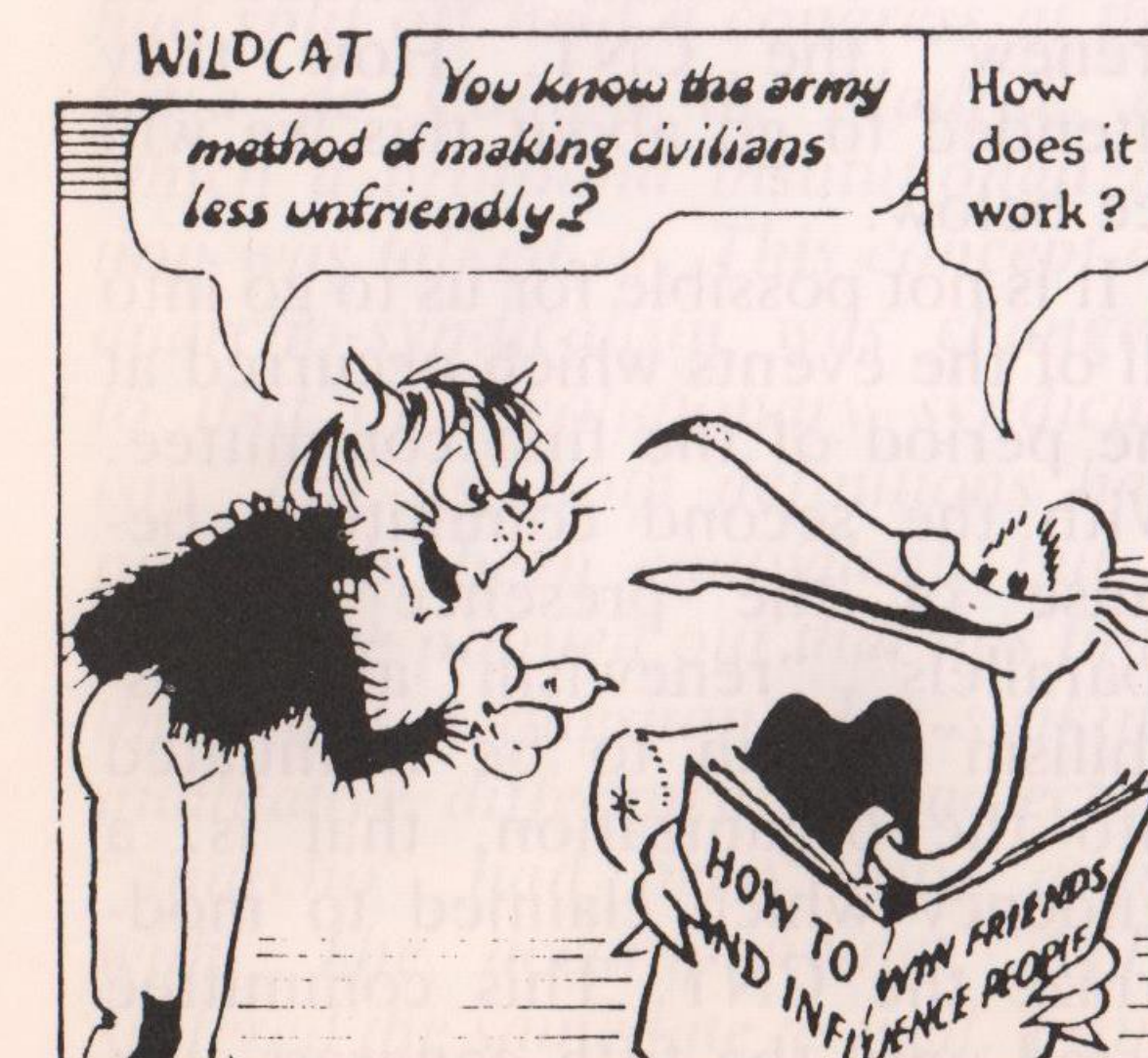
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Gordon

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[Answer: The Clydeside Anarchist referred to was the paper of that name. Is it dead now?]



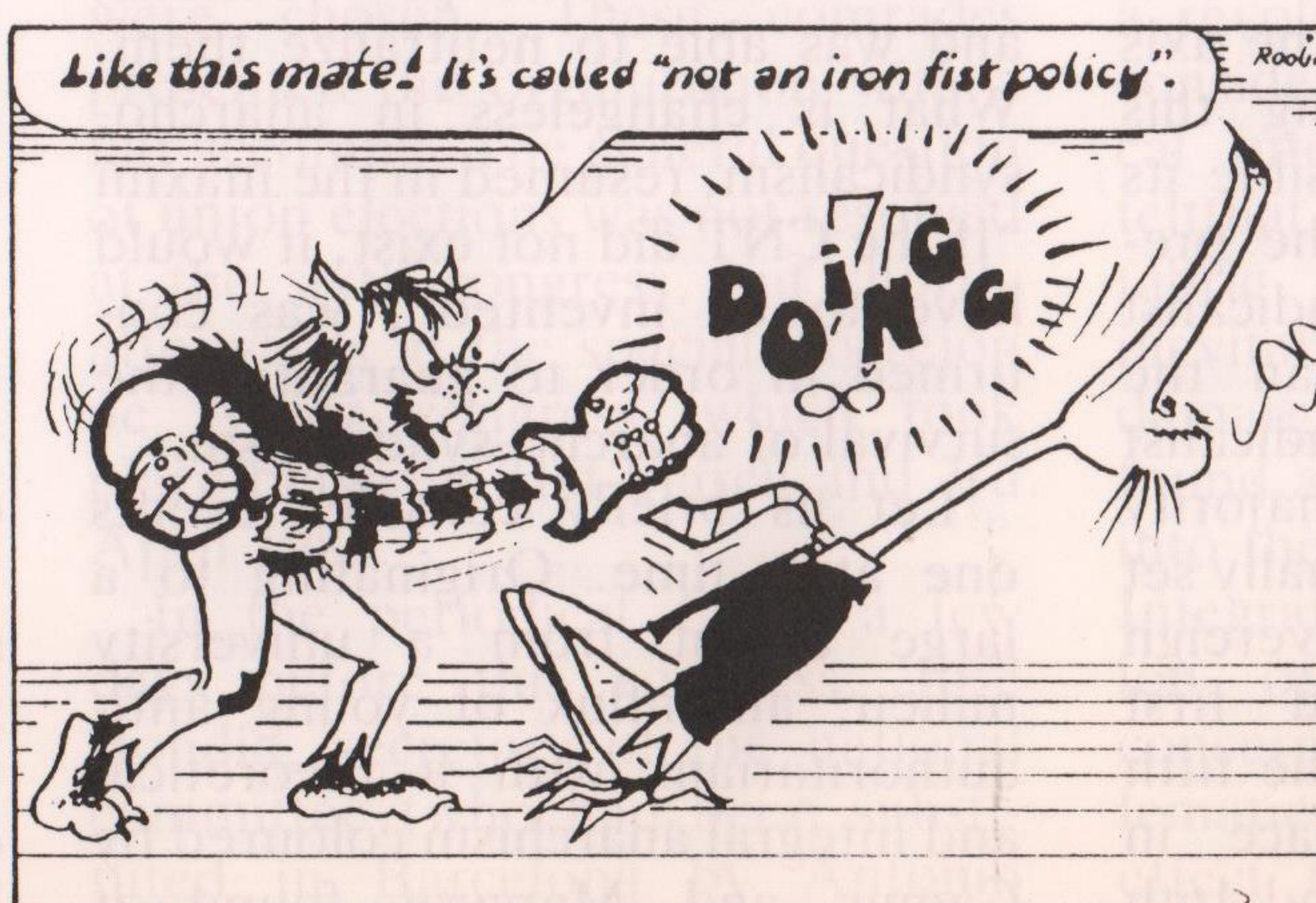
Gus MacInnes

BAD NEWS from Glasgow. Gus MacInnes, who has been held in Barlinne Prison since March, got smacked with a 1 year sentence backdated to his arrest in March. Gus is an ex-filth, in fact a CID detective sergeant. That was more than 10 years ago and since then he has become involved with animal rights, turned vegan and of course ANARCHIST. To start off with most of us didn't trust him, but after Price Shitehouse (NUM sequestrators) occupation we had no reason to doubt him.

Well anyway, the strange thing about his case was that he pleaded guilty hoping for a lesser charge and the judge was Mr Scum Bastard Smith of Price Waterhouse execution fame who had a bit of a

vendetta with us after our "out-rageous" behaviour in court. None of us could get into court except his wife, daughter and a friend of his not involved with any of us. Now that he is inside his outside "interests" to put it mildly are fucked. Gus had a small taxi business (one taxi) which gave him enough cash to get by and pay his mortgage. Well anyway, we are all skint and a few of us involved with a vegie group have managed to raise him some readies (£300 or thereabouts) but we can't keep it up as we're skint as well. So if anyone can donate towards Gus here are his Support Group's details: Angus MacInnes Support Group, account no 3925 at the TSB or through the above address.

Clydeside Anarchists



The Real CNT Stands Up

This article by the Press Secretary of the CNT-AIT is an attempt to clear up the widespread confusion about events in Spain. Anarchists are supposed to be more internationally orientated than other people, but in practice, accurate information is hard to come by. So this article is very welcome, in spite of its slightly "in-speak" style, which we have left unaltered rather than add errors of our own. Regrettably it does need to be said that *Freedom* does NOT support the breakaway "CNT"-U, -R, etc. For our readers information only, we have published reports of their activities. This does NOT make us their supporters any more than covering the NUM makes us Communist Party fans or Social Democrats!

A REPORT ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF LA CONFEDERACIÓN NACIONAL DEL TRABAJO (CNT)

A CERTAIN CONFUSION, which seems to exist presently in national and international circles with respect to problems that our organization has experienced recently, and continues to experience, has obliged us to clarify our position, and to make it widely known.

The rebirth of the CNT occasioned a large influx of very different kinds of people. Apart from already existing CNT groups, which had formed during the long clandestine period, many young people who were essentially anti-authoritarian joined the organization, along with anarchist and protest groups and a diversity of radical groups, as well as a variety of leftist cells. Thus, as events developed, problems of a "new" CNT began to make themselves known by "parallels" and "renovators". Obscured by this and other factors was the anarcho-syndicalist bloc, which functioned as the axis of the organization during this period, and has made possible its ongoing development to the present day. The anarcho-syndicalist bloc is nothing other than the totality of the anarcho-syndicalist militants, who formed a majority of the organization, and usually set the pace during its sovereign congresses. This agitated first phase lasted almost until the fifth congress, which took place in Madrid between the 8th and 16th

of December, 1979. Up to this point, two national committees were in place, one of which was chosen at the Aluche (an area of Madrid) general assembly by 4-500 militants who were organized in groups and unions. Gomez Casas was elected general secretary by the comrades who had been chosen for the standing secretary of the national committee. Enrique Marcos was designated general secretary of the second committee, which was elected in Barcelona, and lasted until the fifth congress.

All kinds of things had been taking place within the CNT up to this point. On a humorous note, we could add that one person found that events had been reminiscent of a Hitchcock story. Friends smiled, but were in agreement. What we have termed the anarcho-syndicalist bloc, that is, a majority of the organization, resisted a variety of provocations, and was able to neutralize them. What is changeless in anarcho-syndicalism, resumed in the maxim "If the CNT did not exist, it would have to be invented", was confirmed in order to guarantee the survival of anarcho-syndicalism.

Let us briefly consider events one at a time. Originating to a large extent from a university milieu, an influx of young anti-authoritarians with a theoretical and integral anarchism coloured by Camus and Marcuse found it

difficult to work within a syndicalist framework. Their vision of a radical and pure anarchism, in a historical perspective which is necessarily rigorous, could not be other than conflicting. Some adapted, while others left, not without creating a variety of problems at the same time. Others gravitated around a number of so-called libertarian journals, from which they took to sniping at us in a rather sordid manner. The "integrals", who favoured a CNT open to everything, to syndicalist questions, but especially to ones which affect society in general, could almost be placed in this category. They, too, left in large numbers when they found it difficult to work in the specifically syndicalist aspects of the organization.

There were also Marxists of various stripes: councilists with a libertarian orientation but followers of Pannekoek, as well as Trotskyists affiliated with the Fourth International who were centred mainly in Valencia and had penetrated the CNT en masse. Ultimately, they were thrown out. This episode was quite Kafkaesque. There were also the anarcho-communists of Askatasuna, who were followers of Archinov, the Russian libertarian theoretician who attempted to found an anarchist party. Soon there were classic Leninists and Stalinists, who had infiltrated to play a wrecking rôle in the assemblies, caucussing, and putting forth their line. All of them met with no success.

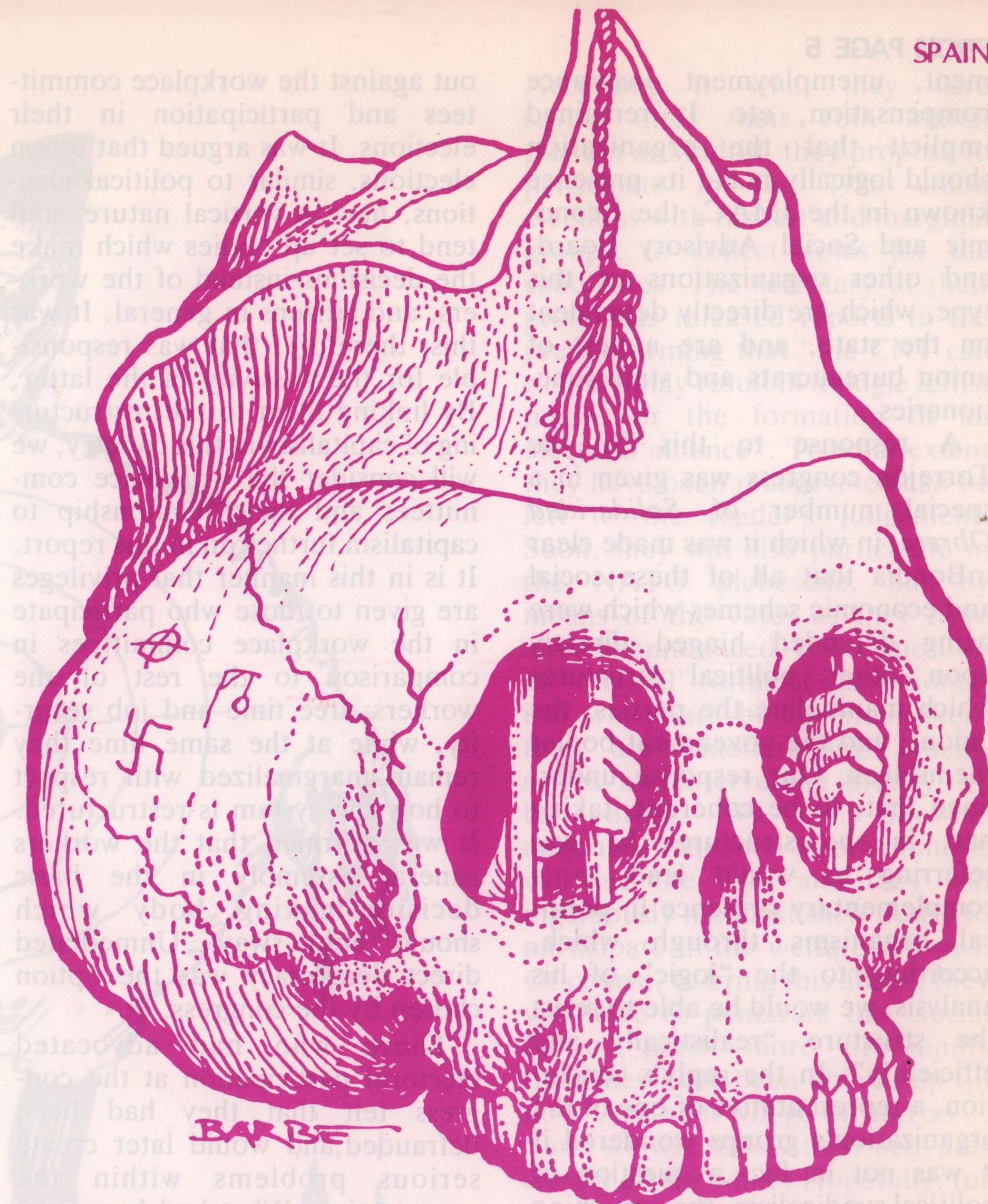
The "parallels" and "renovators" had already made their presence known with the first national committee. The former were a genre of libertarian Marxists, in vice versa, and the latter, a new wave which intended to "renew" the CNT. How they intended to go about this we will see below.

It is not possible for us to go into all of the events which occurred at the period of the first committee. With the second committee, because of the presence of the "parallels", "renewism" and "possibilism" began to be insinuated into the organization, that is, a tendency which claimed to modernize the CNT. This committee lasted until the fifth congress, the

first to take place since the May 1936 congress in Zaragoza.

Similar to all the confederation's congresses, this one was tense, and resulted in a reaffirmation of the classic aspects of the organization. The report concerning theory and principle on the fifth point was supported by almost all the delegations. Nevertheless, 53 delegates left before the congress was over. Attempts to dissuade them were made, and pleas went out for them to be reasonable, and to accept an organic process. But it appears that they were animated by prior motivations, and compromises of "mutual defense" between themselves were already in evidence. Thus came about the first split in the CNT. Those who left, representing 7-8% of the organization, held a congress in Valencia. Violence and a lack of liberty of expression at the fifth congress were alleged. This is imprecise. All delegations expressed themselves as often as they wished. And so began a series of distortions which continue to this day.

At the fifth congress, a new general secretary, José Bondía was named, a position he will hold for almost the next three years. This unusual period of time coincided with a period of limited activity which occurred after the congress. What is called the long mandate was operative, during which abuses of power took place. From the national committee itself, a determined vision of a strategy to be followed which is against the organization's principles began to manifest itself. Although space does not permit a full account, it was during this period that two concepts of future confederal activity began to become clearly defined: one in favour, and the other against union elections. Those who had split off held a congress at the Casa de Campo de Madrid, at which a profound institutionalization was talked of. This concept of anarcho-syndicalism was changed to that of revolutionary syndicalism. For us, both definitions had previously been equivalent, but it should be pointed out that this time there was a question of a striking qualitative difference: the adjective "anarcho" had been done away with. The accompanying "AIT" suffered the same fate as well. From



this point on, they turned their backs on the AIT.

Institutionalism also began to manifest itself in a sector of our organization at the sixth confederal congress, which took place in Barcelona from 12-16th January, 1983. Bondía expressed himself very much in favour of union elections, anticipating the congresses' decision. Previous to this, and without waiting for the outcome, federation groups from the Barcelona subway and another from the Bank of Madrid presented themselves at union elections, and some were chosen. These comrades presented the organization with a fait accompli. The general question of union elections was not resolved at the sixth congress, but shortly afterwards at the special Torrejón de Ardoz congress, which took place between 31st March and 3rd April 1983.

In the periodical CNT, a few days before this congress, José Bondía, secretary of the national committee (who had been substituted in Barcelona by Antonio

Pérez from Andalusia) made it clear that he intended to support the sector which had opted for union elections at the special Torrejón congress, but he was unable to prevail before a clear majority of syndicalists who were opposed to electoralism, which represents to a certain extent a continuation of the Francoist vertical unions.

In his article, Bondía begins by affirming that the CNT is an entity composed of both syndicalism and anarchism, making possible an oscillation between reformism and a revolutionary outlook. Without considering the question of political integration on principle, he felt that our absorption into the fabric of Spanish society was inevitable, and considered that demarginalization signifies as profound and powerful an integration into the social process as possible. Integration would give an impression of realism and efficiency concerning labour and social problems, and issues that directly effect the workplace: unemploy-

continued over

ment, unemployment insurance compensation, etc. It remained implicit that the organization should logically make its presence known in the IMAC, the Economic and Social Advisory Board, and other organizations of this type, which are directly dependent on the state, and are a nest of union bureaucrats and state functionaries.

A response to this by the Torrejón congress was given in a special number of *Solidaridad Obrera*, in which it was made clear to Bondía that all of these social and economic schemes which were being defended hinged directly upon other political structures which manipulate the parties, the unions, and the government bodies themselves. Our response underlined that, to be coherent, taking part in the structures he was referring to would lead to a complementary presence in political organisms through which, according to the "logic" of his analysis, we would be able to resist the structure "realistically and efficiently". In the reply's conclusion, a representative of one of the organization's groups wondered if it was not in fact a question of political syndicalism, the very thing that had led Pestaña to create a syndicalist party in 1933 to intervene directly in the political arena.

Of course, workplace union activity, and the problem of union elections does not necessarily signify a move in this direction, but the philosophy of those who were defending the latter obscures a number of complex presumptions in emphasising that we should overcome our isolation by being where the workers are, and by adopting a more modern and realistic attitude. The problem of where the workers find themselves was clarified in the final conclusions of the special congress: hemmed in, dominated and exploited in the mess that this system has caused.

The debate concerning union activity in the workplace which took place during the Torrejón congress lasted a whole afternoon and night. All of the locals which were present had an opportunity to make their position known through their delegates. A clear majority, reflected in the final vote, came

out against the workplace committees and participation in their elections. It was argued that union elections, similar to political elections, have a vertical nature, and tend to set up bodies which make the decisions instead of the workers, and citizens in general. It was this, therefore, that was responsible for the passivity of the latter. By linking them to the restructuring of capitalism in this country, we will consider the workplace committees and their relationship to capitalism further on in this report. It is in this manner that privileges are given to those who participate in the workplace committees in comparison to the rest of the workers: free time and job security, while at the same time they remain marginalized with respect to how the system is restructured. It was affirmed that the workers general assembly in the basic decision-making body which should hold sway. Unmediated direct democracy was the option chosen by the congress.

Those who had advocated electoral participation at the congress felt that they had been defrauded, and would later create serious problems within the organization. What had happened at the fifth congress serves as an antecedent. To avoid this, a Madrid delegation from the graphic arts union asked for the floor before the debate got underway. They stated that their union was opposed to union elections and the workplace committees, but added that they were willing to accept the decision that the majority came to. They pleaded with all the delegations to follow their example, given that the period between congresses would render a definitive verdict concerning the position which had been adopted. It was stated that this was the only reasonable approach, and the only one which can guarantee the survival of any collective.

It is now obvious that this suggestion was not acceptable to the minority tendency. Shortly after the Torrejón conference was over, a subterranean campaign against the adopted position was agreed upon and launched on a national level. Campaigns that were parallel to the organization's activity were initiated, union locals

went unpaid for, and the organization's press was rejected. Furthermore, those who had previously split off from the organization were contacted, a group which at this period found itself in total disarray. An important sector from the Bank of Madrid, those who had previously rejected an organic process with respect to union elections, and had presented themselves as electoral candidates, played a key rôle in the new segregationist sector. Their warning was clear: "It is now that you will know". *This attitude was a result of the position that they had come to previously: that the ends justify the means, and that any attitude is justifiable if it achieves the desired result.*

Ultimately, the organization was obliged to come to a decision with respect to these parallel activities, and proceeded to de-federate certain groups, and to eject a number of individuals who had been waging war within the organization by any and all means. "The theoretician of budding political syndicalism" of whom we had already spoken was thrown out of the Madrid metalworkers' union. About 150 people were removed from the organization at this point. This group, which was already in contact with those who had left in 1979 through a co-ordinator in Andalusia, joined them in what was termed the CNT "reunification congress". This was unspeakable. Thus came about a perfect example of what is meant by the principle that the ends justify the means. In Madrid, the media were informed at a press conference that the CNT-AIT and the Valencia CNT congress were joining, putting an end to the previous period of separation: *Clearly, as can be inferred from this report, it was a question of a cynical reunion of all of those who had left, had been de-federated or ejected since the rebirth of the CNT in 1976.* The CNT-AIT, that is those of us who had been affiliated with the International Workers' Association since its founding in 1926, found these events unbelievable. This was really the last straw. Comrades were obliged to denounce this as a usurpation of our name itself. Scruples and ethical considerations you might ask? But what are the



ethics of the procedures that we are denouncing? The overriding factor is that those who have been de-federated and thrown out, and are now going about calling themselves the CNT-AIT, are now a CNT without the AIT, and have adopted the position of the splitters at their Casa de Campo de Madrid congress. They are following the very same path. We will now state what it is they expect to accomplish, in our judgement.

How the Situation Stands at the End of March, 1985

We would calculate that those who have left the organization represent 12-15% of the total membership, although their presence in the streets is quite below this figure, and their interventions in the most recent demonstrations emphasize their insignificance. When a demonstration was called to support

the shipping sector, which is presently in a process of restructuring, 30 people showed up, whereas more than 1,500 of our comrades from Asturias, Segunto, Puerto Real, Balboa and Madrid were present. This situation now obliges them to participate in a variety of kinds of demonstrations with other minority groups, ecologists, left Marxists and Marxists of other stripes. It has been announced that they will participate in the next May 1st demonstrations, which traditionally brings together the Communist Party, the Socialist Party and the left in general, though not the CNT, which holds its own demonstration in Madrid and throughout the rest of Spain.

For the time being, this is the latest move towards what is considered institutionalization by those who have left the organization.

According to what they were saying after their 16th March plenum in Madrid, they propose to participate in the 1986 union elections with the left and marginal groups, to collect votes for the candidates. The secretary of their group has released reports to the press affirming that "the CNT call to unity may result in a single leftist union, or the formation of an electoral alliance". To what extent they have been recuperated can be left to the reader's judgement. Soon, they will also participate in the NATO plebiscite, but by means of the vote, as they have already announced. It is a question of "original" forms of institutionalism which are being undertaken; they are "modernizing" themselves, and intervening directly... by voting. We can likewise announce that soon a communiqué will see the light and they will ingeniously manifest their desire to participate in the welfare reforms. Of course, to bring this about, they will have to penetrate the "social fabric" much more profoundly than they have been able to up till now. And so it will go on and on...

and we will follow their activities closely all the while. Hopefully, for now, everything that we have related will be sufficient to dispel the doubts of those we have referred to at the beginning of this text.

As to the media in general, we are not proposing a political/philosophical sermon to them, but we do wish to point out that important information gaps have slipped in concerning the CNT. This includes the name CNT being applied to the segregationist sectors on television on the 16th March. For further reference to be accurate, we would like to specify that for the true CNT militants, the sectors that we have been referring to throughout this text have not split the organization, they are simply no longer part of it. It is they who would profit the most from a close reading of this text.

For the standing secretary
José María Sanz Baonza, press secretary,
 Madrid, March 25th 1985

Translation by Federico Arcos and
 Michael William

Pornography: The Thorn in all our Flesh

After publishing Donald Room's letter on the censorious 'anarchists' who attack sex shops (*Freedom* July 1985), it was predictable that we should receive letters on the subject of pornography. We are concerned that these letters demand repression of pornography; it is the issue of repression, not pornography, that we must address. We have therefore been provoked into producing an article or discussion document stating an anarchist view on the subject.

THE WRITERS of this article, Arabella Melville and Colin Johnson, used to publish a sex magazine: *Libertine*. In 1977 we were tried under the Obscene Publications Act for our activities, and faced the possibility of a six-year sentence. We were found not guilty by unanimous verdict of a jury of nine men and three women.

Pornography: (Concise Oxford Dictionary) Explicit description or exhibition of sexual activity in literature, films, etc, intended to stimulate erotic rather than aesthetic feelings; literature etc containing this.

When we used to publish *Libertine* (The Magazine for Sexual Freedom), we used to get letters very like those received by *Freedom* in response to Don's comments. Our letters tended to come from overt fascists who knew what they were and what they were about; we received few from confused 'anarchist' sources. Indeed, many 'ordinary' libertarians appeared in our trial as witnesses for the defence. It is perhaps predictable that the tone and content of such letters is identical, whatever the claimed view of their authors. From what they write it is impossible to see how they differ.

It is therefore with a feeling of deep sadness that we write this article for *Freedom*. A decade ago, such basic explanations of the reality of censorship, repression and freedom would have appeared in the more conservative publications of the left. To have to go right back over ground we had assumed

we had won, and to do so for an anarchist publication, is a frightening indication of how far we have been pushed back in the grey oppressive eighties.

We published *Libertine* because we like sex. We enjoy its many varied aspects and expressions and wanted to share this with others, to help them discover their own sexual potential.

Britain is a particularly unsexual society. We used to receive hundreds of letters each week from people whose lives had been ruined by repression and superstition. It seemed only natural for us, as anarchists, to try to blow some of that away.

We did not claim to be original. *Libertine* consciously followed in the wake of *Oz*, *Suck*, *Curious* and *Forum*. *Libertine* was unique in the

loyalty of its readership, however; the magazine was written by its readers in the end.

The police raided us because we hit a raw nerve in the establishment's armour. Sexual inhibition and anxiety are the authoritarians' oldest tools. If you make people feel guilty and anxious about the profound changes that happen around puberty, if you control human sexuality, you can control everything else — for life. Various Christian churches have sanitised and refined this process in recent history. And those who help to maintain their values will maintain their control.

When we were interviewed at Scotland Yard, a senior officer said, "Don't you realise that if you tell people sex is okay, that they can do what they like, you will change the whole nature of our society?" Oh yes, we knew. We were surprised to get such a succinct understanding of our purpose from them.

The current dominant response to matters sexual indicates the degree to which we failed and they continue to win. Fundamental libertarian principles are still being

Compared to the 1960s, we now live in a highly reactionary age, where religion and authoritarian right are exercising a dominant influence on our culture. Repressive attitudes to sexuality and erotic literature are part and parcel of authoritarian regimes all over the world. Such regimes both create and feed on highly charged emotional fears. Within the modern feminist movement the authoritarian notion that women's writings must not be criticised *even by other women*, has generated just such an authoritarian atmosphere. Anarcho-feminism may be a bridge between the two, but bridges permit traffic *both* ways. Dressing up of conservative repressive attitudes in "radical" clothes as "women's issues" is a poor substitute for anarchism. Radical feminists, while railing against porn, will even defend the right of their lesbian sisters to look at and enjoy *Playboy*! They only object to *men* looking at it . . . The stand *Freedom* is going to take for genuine anarchist attitudes to sexuality is running against the grain of this modern sexual fascism. So be warned now that we will not publish letters of mere vulgar abuse, threats, or angry christianity-in-drag. **the editors**

WARNING: "Since Fascism, whenever and wherever it makes its appearance, is a movement borne by masses of people, it betrays all the characteristics and contradictions present in the character structure of the mass individual. It is not, as commonly believed, a purely reactionary movement — it is an amalgam between rebellious emotions and reactionary social ideas."

Wilhelm Reich

lost in panic amid the minefield of sexual fear and repression.

Superficially the issue is a simple one: I should be free to read sexually stimulating magazines, see erotic art or blue films, or to create them if I wish to do that. And the freedom of the (illusory) dirty raincoat brigade to do the same is just as valid. Even at this level we must treat freedom as an absolute, notwithstanding its good and bad aspects. Such judgements of the use to which we put our personal freedom are extremely subjective. Your view of which is which will differ from mine, but unless we uphold each others' freedom to such subjective differences, we do not have freedom.

Those who oppose pornography usually do so on the following grounds. It is said to present a degrading view of humanity; it is said to be exploitative, particularly of women, and it is said to promote the sort of attitudes that produce sexual violence against women. Some feminists argue that pornography is equivalent to rape.

None of these are valid arguments for anarchists. The first relies on a view of humanity which either discounts our sexual nature or believes it must be hidden to retain its value in coercive personal relationships — the economic and political basis of the nuclear family. This is underwritten by the cult of virginity, religious taboos, and ultimately depends on belief in god.

The exploitative argument is a relative one. All the people we have known in the western world who get involved in porn do so either because they enjoy it, or because they like the money it can generate. Women can earn much more than men in this business. In the third world the exploitation argument has more strength, but then all forms of exploitation are exaggerated in third world countries.

It worries us that feminists protest so much. The exploitation of women is evident in every shop in the high street, usually much more offensively than in porn. In the supermarket, the image of woman as moronic drudge whose sole aim and highest achievement in life is feeding a brood and



This picture is a mock-up in *Life* magazine in 1946 (copyright in the photograph, A. L. Schafer) of the Hollywood Code of the time, listing the Ten Commandments of *Thou Shalt Not Show This in the cinema*.

constant cleaning, is perpetuated on every cereal and detergent package.

In the pharmacy, woman is an object who must paint, perfume, deodourise herself to be socially acceptable and attractive to men. In the lingerie shop woman is exorted to disguise her flabby female flesh, itself the product of degrading social attitudes, with elastic and bones whose reality is softened with feminine lace to fool us, to emulate the body of a plastic model.

Every commercial enterprise feeds on these core images of female nature to fatten its bank balance. We are surrounded by shops where the degradation of independent sentient womanhood is rife. And the truth is that most women are happy with it.

Against this background, the honesty of pornography can be a blast of fresh air. True, the values reflected by that honesty are far from perfect, but they do represent an approach to a deeper truth, one beyond people as passive consumers or controlled digital existences in the state's economic and social computers.

Why, we wonder, do those who aspire to anarchism focus their anger on the irrelevance of woman portrayed as fantasy fodder in the newsagent's top shelf? Why this rather than the influences that pervert women and men from childhood on? It is like squeezing a pimple to deal with bubonic plague.

The related emotive argument is that pornography, by showing women in submissive postures and

continued over

roles, encourages men to treat them so; and in the extreme, encourages rape. Those who believe this should look at the evidence.

Rape is markedly more common in cultures where there are tight controls over pornography. Studies of rapists and other sex offenders reveal that they come from sexually deprived backgrounds where the overt sexual display of the porno mag does not figure.

The clearest picture of these links comes from Denmark. There, after censorship was lifted, rape, attempted rape and minor sexually related crimes like exposure declined rapidly and remained at a much lower level than previously.

In post censorship Denmark there was a porn boom — followed rapidly by a porn crash. Erotic material in the domestic market is now at around 10% of its level before freedom. If there is one thing British pornographers dread it is freedom on the Danish model. They welcome the repression and censorship; it keeps the market high and bouyant.

Danish family evening papers (*Aftenposten*) have film adverts with pictures of cocksucking, if that is what the film is about, or

trees if it is about trees. Few of us would claim that Danish society is harmed by such openness and honesty.

The whole issue of pornography is a product of sexual repression in a censorious society. The answer to it is not more repression and censorship. The argument is similar to Reagan's argument that the only way to disarmament is through more and better weapons. Repression and censorship only breed more of the same.

For anarchists the answer is to create a system of social values wherein pornography is irrelevant. Not because we have suppressed it, but because we and our sexuality, with all its peculiarly human diversity of expression, are really free.

Any other approach leads into a trap. The anti-porners have to appeal to some higher authority to support their action. They then have to reach agreement over the values they are defending, moral, religious or legal, before their value system can be imposed upon those they oppose. This is not a route to anarchy or freedom, but straight into the arms of the *status quo*.

The other option might be direct

action. A series of mini crystal nights in the smoke of burning tits and bums before the shattered pornshop window. No doubt it would be as emotionally satisfying as it was in Berlin in 1938. But nothing to do with anarchism if you believe that your freedom ends where someone else's begins.

There is always a danger, particularly when dealing with such deep and muddled waters as sexuality, of being led further than you would rationally wish to go. For militant anarchists it may be too easy to trip over a raw emotional edge and emerge as born again fascists, serving someone else's ends.

Freedom can never be the product of repression, sexual or other. Those who attack pornography are reinforcing the core of our authoritarian society. Sexual fear and anxiety is the last and most powerful bastion of authoritarianism; it thrives in a sexual desert.

To those who insist on censorship and repression, we can only say this: if you cannot cope with other people's freedom, no matter how distasteful its expression may be to you, then you are not yet an anarchist.

Arabella Melville
Colin Johnson

Different Ideas of Freedom

A couple of years ago, when the popular press was enjoying the circulation boost provided by the Yorkshire Ripper case, I found myself speculating on the motivations which could set someone off into such a murderous pattern of behaviour. I came to the conclusion that the "Ripper's" way of thinking was an extreme manifestation of the contradictions which exist in the minds of "normal" men. The "Ripper" had in his mind two categories of women. There were ordinary women — his wife, his mother and the woman he had an affair with — and there were the others. What made the others different and turned them in his mind into

objects which he had a mission to destroy was not so much who they were as the effect they had on him. I believe he both wanted the women he killed and also hated himself for wanting them because society told him that his desires were wrong and I also believe that his inability to handle this duality was what forced him to kill and that this duality is present in less extreme forms in the minds of most men.

Women, in the way they dress, are encouraged to become attractive to men. Each woman who accepts, consciously or unconsciously, the pressure to turn herself into an advert for her own potential attractions runs the risk

that in order to attract a man she must make herself attractive to all men. This exposes women to risks which they are in no sense responsible for since they are extraordinarily difficult to resist. It also has some very bad effects on men. It makes them cope in their minds with the knowledge that they are sexually attracted to women who they feel they shouldn't be attracted to if they are going to comply with their own morality. This could be a simple situation such as a man who considers himself to be a supporter of women's liberation finding himself excited by a piece of unpleasant pornography or it could be much more complex and

dangerous. For instance, a man's sister may, as a result of media pressure, dress in ways which emphasise her sexuality and the man may find himself surprised and disgusted by a discovery that he desires her. The same may take place in a whole number of other circumstances such as a secret desire for a neighbour's wife, a best friend's girl (consider the number of popular songs on this theme) or a daughter, the list of possibilities is a long one. The duality of attraction and disgust of self for being attracted can be mild or severe depending on the circumstances and depending on the individual but it is, I believe, present in the minds of most



"normal" men as well as in the minds of the all too numerous men who indulge in rape, murder or incest in response to the psychological pressure.

If this analysis is even vaguely correct then important conclusions follow. Firstly, and most importantly, I would argue that the turning of women into sex objects is the exact opposite of freedom for both men and women. It creates physical danger and fear of men in women and it creates secret and hateful desires and self disgust in men which can, and all too often do, turn into hatred of women. Therefore anything which encourages men to think of women as no more than sexual opportunity or

which encourages women to think of themselves as no more than something to be packaged as successfully as possible is repressive. Conversely, anything which enables us to relax about our sexual desires and treat each other as real people is liberatory.

Seen in this context it makes no sense at all to talk of attacks on sex shops or porno video shops as repressing the free expression of sexual desires. I, like virtually all Western men, have seen a significant number of pornographic magazines and films — not one of them ever encouraged the attitude of mind which sees sex as something which is mutually enjoyed by equals who have no desire to exploit each other. On the contrary, virtually all of them delivered, either directly or indirectly, the message that the worst desires I possessed were actually acceptable and standard ways to behave and, to the extent that they succeeded, were repressive. I would therefore consider it entirely legitimate and would be quite willing to participate in propaganda attacks on any institution which treated women as a commodity and sex as exploitation.

There is however a problem. Many people on the left accept some or other version of the argument against pornography in all its forms which I've just repeated but they extend the argument into a belief that pornographic magazines, shops, etc. should be banned by the state. This is a difficult line of argument to accept because it implies that we should place our faith in the ability of the government to promote the cause of women's liberation. Do we really believe that banning pornography will help improve men's attitudes towards women or will it worsen them? Put it another way, I feel reasonably safe in saying that there was generally less pornography in the 1950's. I'm not, however, convinced that attitudes to women were better in the '50s than they are today. Women's oppression can take more than one form and sexual ignorance is probably worse than widespread sexual titillation. There is, I would argue, little clear evidence that the increase in the volume of por-

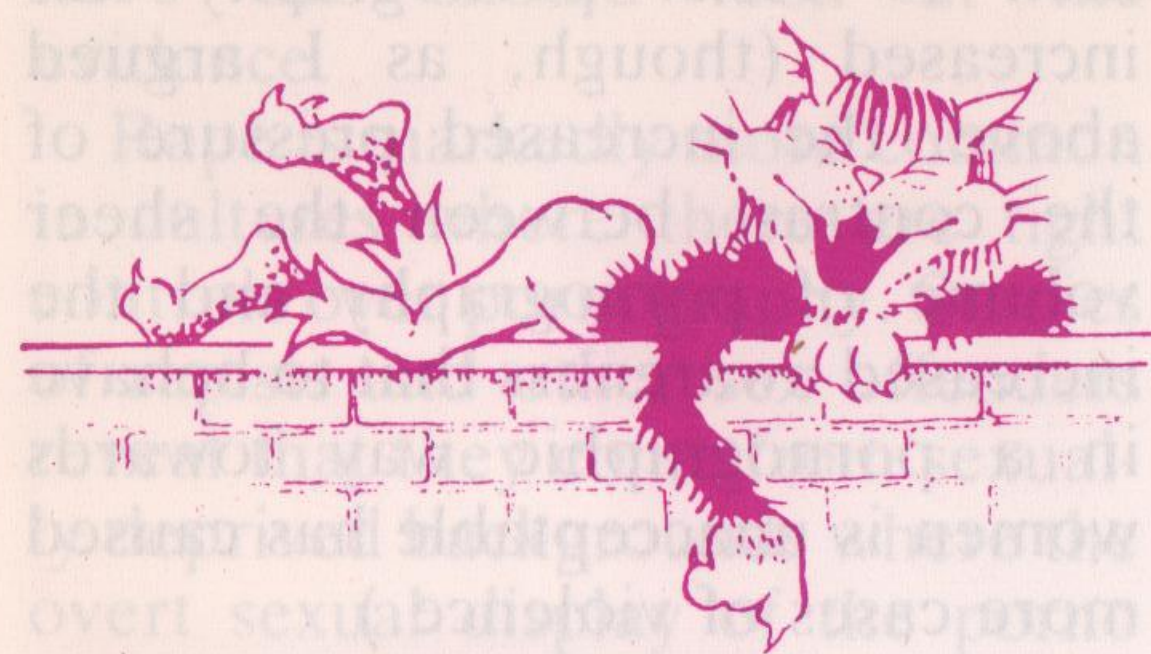
nography has increased women's sexual oppression. What has happened is that the ability of most men to resist pornography has increased (though, as I argued above, the increased pressure of the contrast between the sheer volume of pornography and the increased awareness that to behave in a pornographic way towards women is unacceptable has caused more cases of violence.)

All in all I believe that the best way to deal with pornography is to propagandise against it (and in certain circumstances violence can contribute to successful propaganda) not to join with the Whitehouse brigade and give the impression that the left or the women's movement wants to suppress sex. This means that to me Donald Rooum's treatment of the question of how we should regard sex shops in his recent Wildcat cartoon was totally wrong but for understandable motives.

His cartoon correctly suggested that there is nothing positive in the attempt to ban sex shops and similar institutions but he totally failed to give any indication that these institutions are suppressors of our freedom. He made one of his characters suggest that he quite liked sex shops and that this was one expression of his free attitudes. It is not. To allow oneself to be conned into the styles of thinking which such shops encourage is to become dominated by a dangerous and enslaving way of thinking. Our attitude should therefore be one of thoroughgoing opposition to such shops and the whole debate should be one of how we can liberate people from the power of such places to utilise desires which are fundamentally destructive both of self and of others, not how we can allow these shops the freedom to permeate our minds with crap. In short, I would not regard it as an expression of my liberty if, under the influence of psychological pressures I couldn't control, I murdered someone. I refuse to regard it as an expression of liberty when someone who makes a good living out of selling images of women as no more than sex encourages me to think and act in repressive ways.

Andy Brown

Correspondence, Argument and Debate



Wet Mouse

We would like to clear up a few points arising from your review of our recent publications. The Chinese Anarchist Movement was, to our poor uneducated brains, as yet unpublished as a pamphlet. We stumbled upon the original work so we thought that we would publish it as a contribution, however small, to the anarchist literature currently available. You will also have to give us lessons in logic to explain to us how we are pretending that it is a new study. I understand that Freedom is a bit piqued that we reprinted the Cienfuegos pamphlets as you were about to do so yourselves. This initiative occurred because you yourselves reported them as being out of print. We then did the simple thing of phoning up the previous publisher and arranging to publish it with him. We quite often go into bookshops and hear them moaning about the lack of available anarchist literature. We are just making our little contribution towards keeping what we know of still available (not helped by petty reviews). We would gladly print contemporary material but the anarchist movement seems to be a bit short of great (or any) thinkers these days (so if NW wants to see his name credited as an author he knows what to do). We are also sorry to see the review descend into the ongoing war between *Freedom* et al and *Black Flag* et al. I am sure we have all had enough of it by now. Yours bored, **Drowned Rat** (strangely enough the name of a cat that has shuffled off its mortal coil) Collective

[Answer: This letter is an outrageous jumble of rumour, gossip and lies. You do need lessons in

logic. If a pamphlet appears with no indication of its origins or even writers' names, then it does appear to be new. You do *not* understand that Freedom is a "bit piqued" because we aren't, we were *not* about to reprint the two Cienfuegos pamphlets. We understand that Drowned Rat is a bit piqued because you have been criticised but don't try to bolster yourselves with rumour and/or fantasy. We commend "contributions" to keeping things available, attention to failings is not "petty". We weren't aware that the review descended into a "war", you should develop a sense of irony. It is after all ironic that you expect Freedom to sell and support your publications at the same time as you refuse to sell ours!]

[Stu-note: Drowned Rat have not "explained" why they left off the authors names. WHY DID THEY?]

Chinese Review

In the June issue *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* (Bristol 1985) was announced as "another pamphlet just out". Could it be however that this publication is not just another pamphlet, but a reprint of Robert Scalapino and George T Yu *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* (Berkeley 1961)? If so, why not mention the names of the authors and the printing history, if not in the book at least in the book review? After all this scholarly work is well known and the title appears in the biography of nearly everyone who writes about anarchism in China eg Martin Bernal *Chinese Socialism to 1907* (Cornell UP 1976) and Klaus Haag *Schwarze Fahnen gegen Scheinfreiheit: Anarchismus in China* (Ems 1977)

The influence of *Freedom* on the daily press has apparently increased in recent months. How otherwise do you explain statements like "The . . . anarchists . . . are the only hope this country has got" (*The Guardian*, June 24, 1985). Sincerely yours,

Mike Miller

Dynamite Reply

We're sorry Nicolas Walter does not like our treatment of *Dynamite* (*Freedom* review, June issue), but this is probably because our aim in publishing it was propagandist, rather than literary.

What we liked about the book was its sheer enthusiasm. It seemed to us to convey a feeling of the period that was far more powerful than any (more factually accurate, perhaps) academic survey. "Objective" historians are ten a penny — warm, human observers like Louis Adamic are not.

The changes we made were designed to keep this very freshness — to leave the book as it was, we felt, was to render it of interest only to literary historians. So we cut the chapter "What next — more dynamite" because its rambling predictions were for a leftward-moving America. We reduced the sections relating to the 1930s so that they no longer overbalanced the book for readers of the 1980s. We also changed or left out the things which dated the book — sexist language, dated line illustrations, references to the '30s in the present tense and a bibliography of mostly out-of-print books.

On reflection we should probably have included a short explanation at the start of the book for those who like to know about sources. But we don't accept we shouldn't have made changes — it just isn't that precious a text. More importantly, the book as we have published it is a "lively journalistic survey" (to quote NW) which speaks as much to British miners in the 1980s as it did to working people in the 1930s. We suspect the author would not have been at odds with this aim.

Rebel Press
Nicolas Walter answers: In reply to Rebel Press, a good journalist will object as much as a good historian to having copy drastically altered without anyone being asked or told. The new edition of *Dynamite*, quite simply is not the book

Adamic wrote.

In reply to Drowned Rat, their edition of *The Chinese Anarchist Movement* will seem to be a new publication to anyone who doesn't know it already. There is no objection to reprinting Cienfuegos (or any other) publications — though the Freedom Press hasn't considered doing so — only to doing so without acknowledgement.

NW

Class Violence

In the last issue of *Freedom*, Eric TFG argued that "there is no point in class war" and "the true fight is the individual against the state". Has this comrade forgotten something? The state arose primarily as an instrument of class repression, therefore it is hardly likely that those individuals who reap vast benefits from it's continued existence are going to be in opposition to it. Secondly I would like to challenge his notion that class war anarchism is necessarily some kind of macho glorification of conflict: recognising that the rich and powerful will only give up their positions through violence is not macho, just realistic. Whenever the homogeneity of the ruling class has been threatened in the past, our rulers have never shirked from

employing extreme violence. Don't kid yourself that the present day welfare state is any more benevolent, it's just more sophisticated, that's all. (Besides, the pitiful "welfare" that we do have today, far from redistributing wealth, serves our rulers' interests by providing them with healthy wage-slaves and efficient cannon-fodder.)

Anyway, violence is not an exclusively male phenomenon, and it would be sexist to suggest otherwise. Just because women in this capitalist patriarchal society are conditioned to be passive etc, this doesn't mean that the same is true elsewhere; in fact the bulk of anthropological evidence demonstrates otherwise. The image of passive women peace protestors is both lauded and mocked by the media, and plays into the hands of those we are protesting against. A group of people, however large, if adopting a non-violent stance immediately nullify any threat that might be offered.

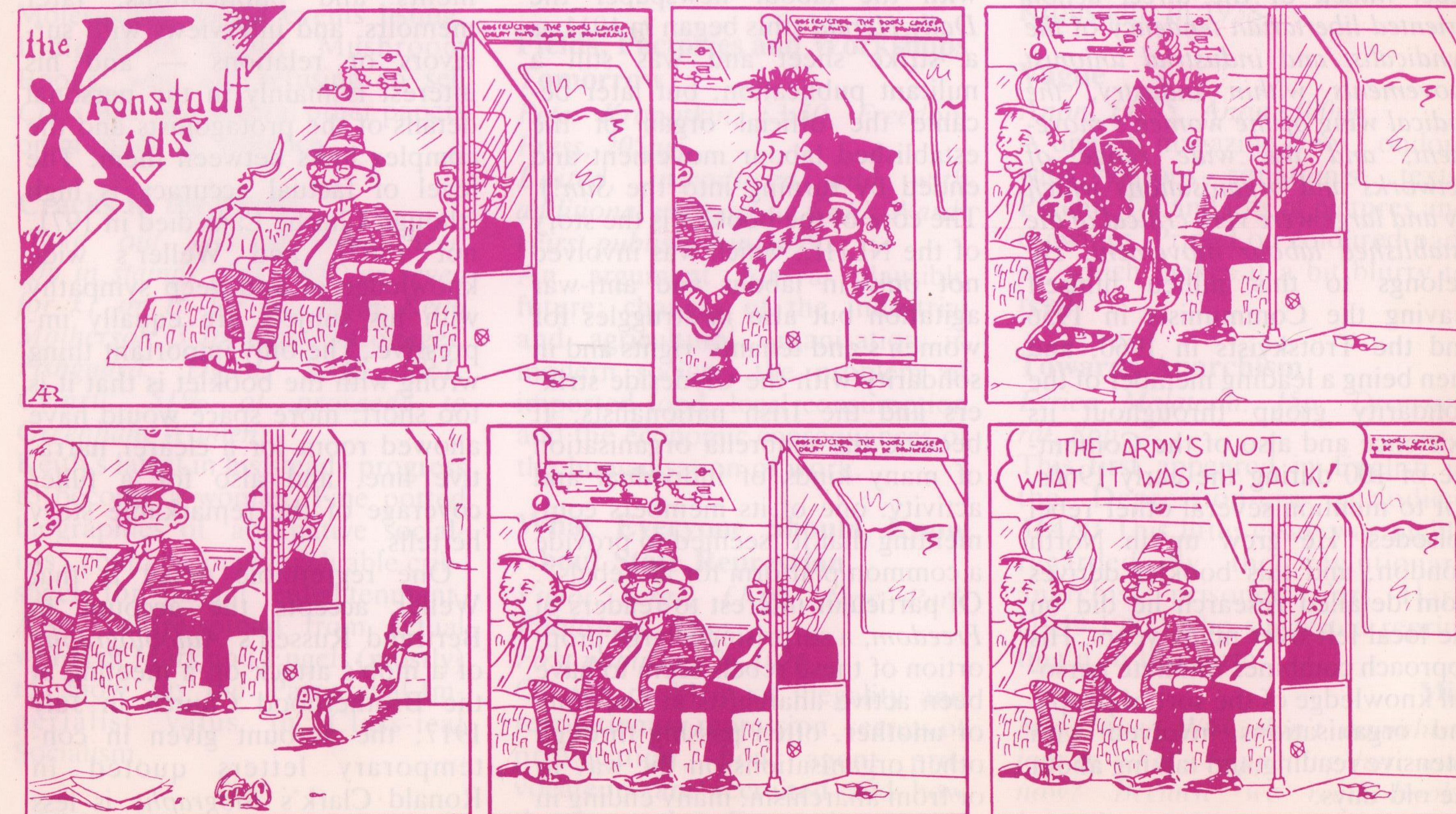
Surely the many examples of those in authority committing gross acts of indecency demonstrates what we are up against. Look at what the filth did at Stonehenge for a more contemporary example. Have a look into the social psychology of people like Milgram and Zimbardo. Both amply demonstrate that those in authority

are easily cajoled into committing murderous acts either when ordered to do so by a higher authority, or when given positions of power. People are not necessarily evil, but we should endeavour to destroy the authoritarian structures that corrupt them, whilst not forgetting that it was people who created them in the first instance.

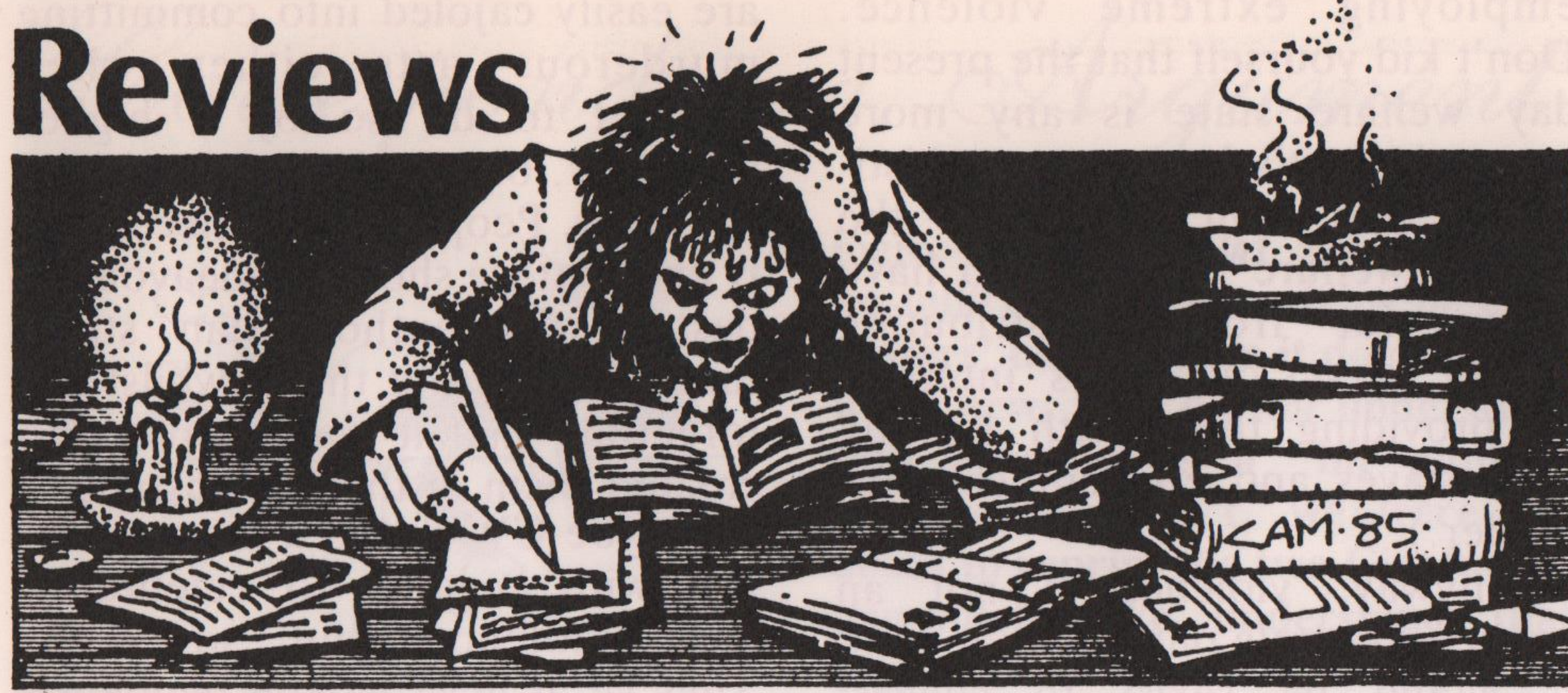
Maybe CW do go a bit over the top with regards to celebrating class violence, but so what? They've at least woken people up to the fact that anarchists do exist (even if most of the publicity has been bad) and this has stimulated a wider interest in anarchism generally. Are CW so violent as some would have us believe? In one issue of CW it said . . . "we reject middle class wanking fantasies revolving round armed revolution". Is their emphasis upon humour and violence not important in making their (and other anarchist literature) more easily accessible?

Revolution involves changing ourselves and the way in which we relate to others (and vice versa). While the state exists we cannot do this, hence we must accept the sad inevitability of class war as the only way in which we shall be freed from the eternal bondage of the state. Yours,

Macho Spiteful (TVAM)
Manchester



Reviews



Don't be a soldier!

by Ken Weller (*Journeyman and London History Workshop Centre*, £3.25).

Don't be a soldier! was the first half of an antimilitarist slogan used 70 years ago; the second half was: *Be a man!* Ken Weller's well-researched, well-written and well-produced 96-page booklet, subtitled *The Radical Anti-War Movement in North London 1914-1918*, describes how a relatively small group of militant activists in a relatively small area of the country succeeded in preserving their humanity during the First World War.

One of his most interesting points is that such people were found not so much among the orthodox pacifists or the orthodox socialists as in what he calls the *rebel milieu* of the *direct action oriented libertarian tendency* of the *syndicalist and industrial unionist movements within industry, the radical wing of the women's movement, and the wide range of networks and organisations which by and large were very critical of the established labour movement*. He belongs to this milieu himself leaving the Communists in 1956 and the Trotskyists in 1960, and then being a leading member of the Solidarity group throughout its existence and also of the Committee of 100 during the early 1960s, not to mention several other rebel episodes. He grew up in North London, and this booklet derives from detailed research he did on the local left over many years. His approach combines intimate personal knowledge of the sort of people and organisations involved with intensive reading and talking about the old days.

The result is a fascinating and unfamiliar story. The scene is set with brief accounts of the conditions of the working class in North London before the First World War and attempts to improve them, and of the protests against the Boer War of 1899-1902 which may be seen as a rehearsal of the severer struggle of 1914-1918. When the First World War began, the left was split, only the extreme left unequivocally resisting the war effort — not only recruitment from 1914 to 1916 and conscription from 1916 to 1918, but also the attempts of the authorities and the employers to keep wages down and hours up at a time of inflation and shortage.

The main organisation embodying the resistance was the North London Herald League, which had been formed in 1913 in association with the labour newspaper the *Daily Herald* (this began in 1911 as a strike sheet and was still a militant publication, but later became the official organ of the established labour movement and ended by turning into the *Sun*!). The core of the booklet is the story of the NLHL, which was involved not only in labour and anti-war agitation but also in struggles for women's and tenants' rights and in solidarity with the Clydeside strikers and the Irish nationalists. It became the umbrella organisation of many kinds of individual and activity, one of its members commenting that it "seemed to provide a common platform for all rebels". Of particular interest to readers of *Freedom*, a surprisingly large proportion of these rebels seem to have been active anarchists at one time or another, often passing through other organisations on the way to or from anarchism, many ending in

the Communist or Labour Party, and all illustrating the important point that the personnel of the British left has always been much more fluid and flexible than might be supposed.

Weller describes the campaigns against conscription and for the Russian Revolution; North London had an efficient system for helping reluctant conscripts on the run or living underground, and also had a large number of Russian émigrés in local socialist organisations, such as the London Workers' Committees and the North London Local of the Industrial Workers of the World, the Workers' Socialist Federation (derived from Sylvia Pankhurst's left-wing suffragette group) and the Brotherhood Church (part of the Christian socialist movement which had been active before the war — one Brotherhood Church still survives in Yorkshire), and he describes the police strikes of 1918-1919, which were based in North London. His main conclusion is that the militant activity of the rebel left against the First World War should be seen as an essential link between the militant activity in the labour movement before and after the war.

Weller's research has been almost entirely in primary source material — contemporary documents and publications, later memoirs, and interviews with survivors or relations — and his interest is mainly in the personal details of the protagonists and the complex links between them. The level of factual accuracy is high (though Charlie Lahr died in 1971, not 1967), and Weller's wide knowledge of and deep sympathy with his subject are equally impressive. The only important thing wrong with the booklet is that it is too short; more space would have allowed room for a clearer narrative line, and also for a fuller coverage of the remarkable story he tells.

One regrettable detail is that Weller accepts the account in Bertrand Russell's *Autobiography* of a mob's attack on a meeting at the Brotherhood Church in July 1917; the account given in contemporary letters quoted in Ronald Clark's *Biography* is less

dramatic but more probable. One especially regrettable omission from the booklet, from our point of view, is the specifically anarchist campaign against the war in general and against conscription in particular, which was led by the group who produced *Freedom* and the syndicalist *Voice of Labour*, then based in North London, and which has never been properly described. But Ken Weller describes so many other episodes properly for the first time that his booklet will give pleasure and profit to anyone who is interested in the history of our movement.

NW

'Virus' (The Enemy Within)

(12pp, 15p, clo 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1)

Issue no 4 has a theme of 'The State', mainly discussion of present attitudes ('Victorian Values'), the monarchy and the attitude or marxism. With a six point platform. Did you nick the front-page hobgoblin from us?

Nottingham Anarchist News

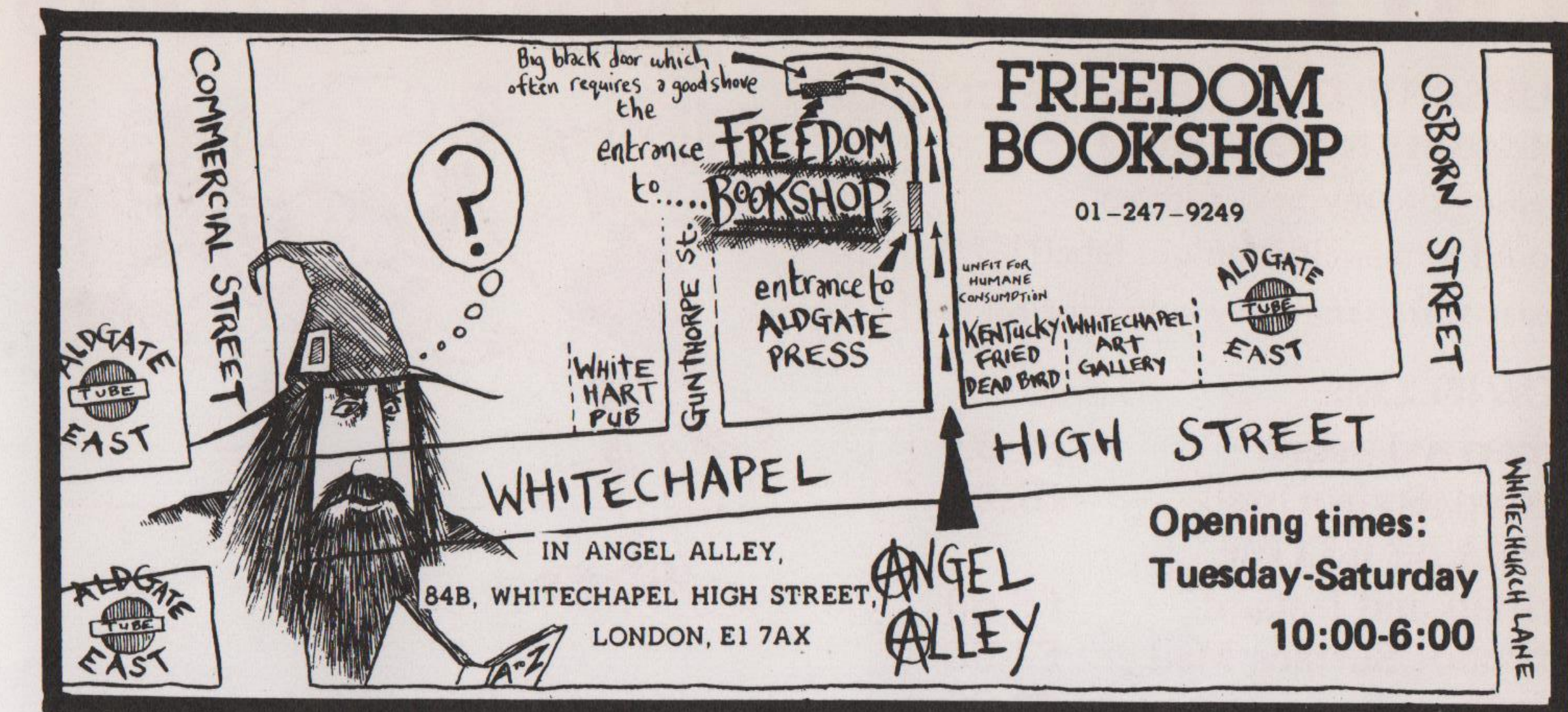
(No 2, June/July '85, at least 10p — no obvious address, try Box A, Mushroom Books, Heathcote Street, Nottingham — but see later). Lively local paper. Passionate comment from people involved eg in local actions, anti-NF protest, Molesworth. Good events listing. Indignation about Mushroom Books, who are refusing to sell *Class War* and several other papers on grounds of 'violence'.

Cracks in the Shells

(Fold out pamphlet/broadsheet, 20p in stamps plus SAE, or seven for £1 or 16 for £2, from Keith Motherson, 3 Jordanston Cottages, Fishguard, Dyfed, SA65 9RT, Cymru. 51% of proceeds to Greenham Women)

Keith's latest in his steady progress to become a woman. Fine potted biographies of 'alternative socialists', could become invaluable crib-sheet for instant enlightenment. Also, centre-spread from actual words of Marx and Engels (mostly) to show up the Patriarchal-Imperialist value in Classical Socialism.

DP



Bookshop Notes

The sale in mid-July went well, and the money that came in went towards the fiction section that I am now expanding. If you have any suggestions for titles, please let me know.

The new Booklist is just out. If you want a copy, send an SAE.

New Books

The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft

Claire Tomalin, £3.95, Penguin, 375pp

Mary Wollstonecraft was the author of *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (which is also in the bookshop) and married to William Godwin. She lived in Paris during the revolution and fought hard for the feminist issue.

Fields, Factories and Workshops Tomorrow

Peter Kropotkin, £3.50, Freedom Press, 205pp

Edited, introduced and with additional material by Colin Ward. (First published in 1899).

An argument for a plausible future; changes of the industrial and agricultural organisation in modern society, the problem of imported food, local consumption and the economic consequences of the humanisation of work.

What Everyone Should Know About State Repression

Victor Serge, £1.00, New Park Publishers, 88pp

First published in 1926

On the problem of illegality and revolutionary repression, secrets of provocation, how agent provocateurs are recruited and how they operate. External surveill-

ance, being followed and 'simple advice to revolutionaries'. Although the book was written about 60 years ago, there is still much useful information in it.

New Pamphlets

Red Army Faction

Anon, 75p, Patrick Arguello Press, 50pp

With a chronology, lots of pictures and communiques, this pamphlet tells about the RAF and the June 2nd Movement in a strive to keep the moment alive and to move the struggle forward.

Trotsky Protests Too Much

Emma Goldman, 40p, Virus, 7pp (Reprint of the 1977 Freedom edition)

A response to Trotsky's pronouncements on the subject of Kronstadt, in 1938.

Vague

Anon, £1.95, Anon, 100pp

A one-off magazine from London, with various situationist texts. Psychic TV and lots of pictures and drawings. Printed on coloured paper, which makes it a bit blurry to read.

Towards Anarchism

Errico Malatesta, 15p, Drowned rat, 8pp

This first appeared in English in the Depression-era periodical *MAN!* This little essay was highly regarded by the revolutionary anarchist prisoner Carl Harp (1949-1981) who suggested reprinting it in this form.

Mia

Mia Joke: Why don't anarchists join in what's happening here and now? Because we read books instead.